

## MOTORIZED-VEHICLE ACCESS ELEMENT

Other than those who are simply crossing it, most desert users travel some of the time on its network of maintained gravel and dirt roads, ways, trails, and accessible desert washes. There are many of these "routes of travel" in the CDCA.

According to one study, the CDCA has 15,000 miles of paved and maintained roads, 21,000 miles of unmaintained dirt roads, and 7,000 miles of vehicle-accessible washes. However, these routes are not evenly distributed, and desert topography and vegetation do not prevent, and ~~even~~ sometimes encourage, cross-country travel in motorized vehicles. Desert soils and vegetation retain the marks of this kind of travel for many years, except in a few places where occasional rains, windstorms, and flash floods erase them. Thus, one vehicle traveling cross-country can create a new route of travel. The proliferation of roads and trails in the CDCA has resulted in a serious problem in ~~many~~ some areas and provides the most difficult management issue for BLM and the public.

Many of the Desert's loveliest and most fragile resources can only be enjoyed by use of vehicle access routes, but these resources are quickly destroyed if vehicles travel everywhere. Most people who go to the Desert revel in its spaciousness and the feeling of solitude and freedom it provides. However, growing numbers of vehicles and uncontrolled expansion of this network of roads and trails may damage this solitude, and heavy-handed regulations to control this traffic would certainly affect the sense of freedom.

The question of managing access to the Desert is especially sensitive. ~~because it is confused with the use of vehicles for play as well as for gaining access dunebuggies, motorcycles, and some four-wheel drive vehicles classified by some under the general heading of "ORVs."~~ Vehicle access is confused with the use of vehicles for play. Public comments make it clear that motorized-vehicle access and off-highway vehicle play need to be clearly separated and managed differently. To this end, management direction for competitive events is found in the Recreation Element. By this amendment, all references to the route approval process contained elsewhere in the Plan are to be interpreted consistent with this revision. It should be clearly understood that both the Recreation Element and this element are subject to, and bound by 43 CFR 8342.1. Compliance to the regulations for competitive events will be demonstrated through environmental assessment documents up to and including, for significant actions, an Environmental Impact Statement. For the route approval process, compliance begins with the criteria for route designation decisions and continues throughout the process.

While the Bureau is responsible for vehicle use on public lands, much of the control of vehicle travel in the Desert ~~will be~~ is the responsibility of the user, whether the goal is recreational or commercial. The Bureau of Land Management does not and will not have the funds or staff to oversee vehicle use throughout the Desert at all times. Therefore, rules for vehicle use must be fair, understandable, easy to follow, and reasonable if they are to be publicly accepted. Only commitment by the public, the owners of these lands, will insure success of rules and guidelines.

The outline for this element is as follows:

### GOALS

#### ACTIONS PLANNED

~~VEHICLE AREA DESIGNATIONS~~

~~ROUTE DESIGNATIONS~~

~~APPLICATIONS OF "LIMITED" DESIGNATION~~

~~STOPPING AND PARKING~~

~~ACCESS ON WASHES, DUNES, AND DRY LAKES~~

#### IMPLEMENTATION

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~~MONITORING~~

~~ENFORCEMENT, COMPLIANCE, AND~~

~~COOPERATION~~

~~LIMITATIONS DURING INTERIM~~

~~MANAGEMENT~~ [#3,82]

### GOALS

The goal of the Motorized-Vehicle Access Element is to provide a system and set of rules governing access to the CDCA by motor vehicles. Specific objectives included are: [#6, 85]

~~(1) To avoid or minimize damage or degradation of the natural, cultural, and aesthetic values of the Desert;~~

~~(2) To provide a reasonable network of "routes of travel" which meets the needs of desert users, including commercial users and BLM's "neighbors," the private landowners and other public land managing agencies in the CDCA;~~

~~(3) To reduce to the greatest possible degree conflicts among the [#3, 82] desert users;~~

~~(4) To provide an element that is understandable, easy to follow, acceptable, and supported and encouraged by most desert users;~~

~~(5) To implement and manage these programs efficiently, economically, and cooperatively; and~~

~~(6) To provide for "appropriate" use of off-road recreational vehicles as directed by FLPMA and in conformance with Executive Orders 11644 and 11989, and 43 CFR 8340. [#3, 82].~~

1. Provide for constrained motorized vehicle access in a manner that balances the needs of all desert users, private landowners and other public agencies.

2. When designating or amending areas or routes for motorized vehicle access, to the degree possible, avoid adverse impacts to desert resources.

3. Use maps, signs and published information to communicate the motorized vehicle access situation to desert users. Be sure all information materials are understandable and easy to follow.

## ACTIONS PLANNED

The goals of the element will be accomplished by establishing rules for managing motorized-vehicle access on public lands, designating areas for appropriate vehicle access, ~~and implementing designations and monitoring programs, decisions, and establishing a desert-wide monitoring program by the end of fiscal year 1987.~~ [#3, 82]

### AREA ~~VEHICLE~~ DESIGNATIONS

In accordance with legislation and policy, all public land in the California Desert is designated "open", "closed," or "limited" for vehicle use. The area designations are made on the basis of multiple-use classes with certain exceptions as set forth in this element. [#3, 82]

~~These designations are made on the basis of multiple-use classes with certain site-specific designations and exceptions as set forth in this element.~~ [#3, 82]

Laws, executive orders, policies, and regulations which cover motorized-vehicle use on public lands are described in detail in Appendix VI to the Proposed Plan (October 1980).

~~The Vehicle-access designations and their locations in the CDCA relationship to multiple-use classes are established by the Plan as follows:~~ [#3, 82]

#### Open Area

~~Vehicles may travel is permitted anywhere within the area if the vehicle is operated responsibly in accordance with regulations and subject to permission of private land owners if applicable.~~ [#3, 82]. This will apply to (1) those lands in Class I specifically designated "open" for vehicle travel, as shown on Map 10; and (2) certain sand dunes and dry lakebeds as listed in Table 8. [#3, 82]

#### Closed Area

No vehicle travel is allowed. This will apply to: (1) all wilderness areas when established by Congress unless exempted; (2) land in ACECs and Special Areas where provided for in ~~the management plans for that ACEC~~; (3) certain sand dunes and dry lakebeds as listed in Table 8, and (4) areas listed in Table 9 which were closed under the Interim Critical Management Plan (ICMP) (1973) and will remain so. [#3, 82]

Note: Although the Motorized-Vehicle Access map (Map 10) shows all of Class C as "closed," vehicle access in these areas will be limited as described below ~~are currently managed under "approved routes of travel"~~ until such time as Congress acts on the wilderness recommendations. They are shown on the map to illustrate what areas would be "closed" to vehicle access if Congress designates these areas as wilderness. ~~Portions of these areas which are listed as "closed" in Tables 8 and 9 of this element are closed now.~~ [#3, 82]

Several areas closed for access under the ICMP are proposed for continued closure or are preliminarily recommended as wilderness or restricted under ACEC Management Plans. Implementation may or may not involve boundary adjustments. To avoid a redesignation process and also to avoid misunderstanding in interpretation of the Plan maps, the areas listed in Table 8 as "closed" under the ICMP will remain closed under the Plan regardless of underlying class, unless modified by subsequent implementing action.

In addition, the following areas are closed. They have been closed under interim actions, or are closed by virtue of nonwilderness protection items in the Plan, are:

<u>Desert Tortoise Natural Area</u>	<u>L</u>
<u>Darwin Falls</u>	<u>M</u>
<u>Mecca Hills (NW half)</u>	<u>C</u>
<u>Squaw Spring</u>	<u>L</u> [#3, 82]

TABLE 9 8

Areas Designated "Closed" Under ICMP Which Remain Closed Under Desert Plan [#3, 82]

ICMP NUMBER	AREA NAME	MULTIPLE USE CLASS
1	Eureka Dunes	C
2	North Saline Valley	C
6a	Owens Peak	C
6b	El Paso Mountain	C
17	Amargosa Canyon	L
22	Clark Mountain	L
24	Kelso Dunes	C
33	Whipple Mountains	C
34	Turtle Mountains	C
43	Desert Lily	L
51	Orocopia Mountains	C
57	San Sebastian Marsh	L
62a	West and SW areas of Davies Valley (In-Ko-Pah Mountains)	C
63	Crucifixion Thorn	L
64	Area Between Pinto Wash and International Boundary	L
66	Imperial Sand Dunes north of State Route 78	C

#### Limited Area

~~Vehicle access will be on "routes of travel" in accordance with the rules for each multiple-use class or Special Area as outlined in this element. This will apply to: (1) all lands in Classes L and M, with differences explained below; (2) any land in Class I that is not specifically designated "open"; (3) land in Class C prior to its establishment as wilderness by Congress; and (4) land in~~

~~ACECs and Special Areas in accordance with the area's management plan. [#3, 82]~~

#### **APPLICATION OF "LIMITED" DESIGNATION**

"Limited" designation vehicle access means that motorized-vehicle access is only allowed only on certain "routes of travel," which include roads, ways, trails, and washes. At the minimum, use will be restricted to existing routes of travel. ~~Seasonal closures, speed limits, etc., may be applied (see Appendix VI to the Proposed Plan, October 1980). Designated vehicle access as it applies to Class L and Class M is as follows: An existing route of travel is a route established before approval of the Desert Plan in 1980, with a minimum width of two feet, showing significant surface evidence of prior vehicle use or, for washes, history of prior use. Where necessary, other limitations will be stipulated. [#3, 82]~~

In all areas of limited vehicle use, special attention will be given to identifying conflict areas, zones of route proliferation, and specific sites or resources being damaged by vehicle use. The public will be involved in each step of this process. Appropriate actions will then be taken to reduce or eliminate the problem, depending on the multiple-use class and degree of control needed: [#3, 82]

Class I: Unless it is determined that further limitations are necessary, those areas not "open" will be limited to use of existing routes. [#3, 82]

Class M: access will be on existing routes, unless it is determined that use on specific routes must be limited further. [#3, 82]

In Class L only those "routes of travel" that are specifically "approved" may be used by motor vehicles. Identification of these "approved" routes will be done by maps and signs. In recognition of the sensitivity of Class L areas, "approved" routes of access will be carefully chosen. However, these may include washes and other non-maintained access routes. This will also apply to Class C prior to wilderness established by Congress and to ACECs where motorized vehicle access is allowed in the management plan.

In Class M existing "routes of travel" may be used for motorized vehicle access, except those that are specifically identified as "closed." "Existing routes of travel" is defined as all routes established before December 31, 1978 (the date of full aerial photo coverage of the GDCA). This will apply to any areas in Class I not designated as "open."

Both Class M and L routes will require immediate initiation of identification and/or mapping. Class M areas may be subject to proliferation of roads, ways, or trails either intentionally or unintentionally. This will necessitate rapid means of identifying the existing network of routes, monitoring use to see if impacts increase, and action to further limit or designate routes if this proliferation occurs.

Class L: Due to higher levels of resource sensitivity in Class L, vehicle access will be directed toward use of

approved routes of travel. Approved routes will include primary access routes intended for regular use and for linking desert attractions for the general public as well as secondary access routes intended to meet specific user needs. Routes not approved for vehicle access will be reviewed and, after opportunity for public comment, those routes deemed to conflict with management objectives or to cause unacceptable resource damage will be given priority for closure through obliteration, barricading, or signing. These closures will be enforced to the maximum capability of BLM. All remaining routes of travel will be monitored for either inclusion as approved routes, or for closure to resolve specific problems. [#3, 82]

Class C and ACECs: in Class C areas prior to wilderness designation by Congress, and in ACECs where vehicle use is allowed, vehicle access will be managed under the guidelines for Class L. [#3, 82]

Undesignated areas: In areas not assigned to a Multiple-Use Class, the route approval process will be applied as needed to resolve specific problems and to establish a cohesive program. [#3, 82]

#### **ROUTE DESIGNATIONS [#3, 82]**

Specific routes in the California Desert will be designated "open," "closed," or "limited" for motor vehicle use. Route designations are generally, but not always, a consequence of area designations.

Vehicle access route designations are established as follows:

##### Open Route

Access on route by motorized vehicles is allowed. Special uses with potential for resource damage or significant conflict with other use may require specific authorization.

##### Closed Route

Access on route is prohibited by motorized vehicles except: (1) fire, military, emergency or law enforcement vehicles when used for emergency purposes; (2) combat or combat support vehicles when used for national defense purposes; (3) vehicles whose use is expressly authorized by an agency head under a permit, lease, or contract; and (4) vehicles used for official purposes by employees, agents, or designated representatives of the Federal Government or one of its contractors. Use must be consistent with the multiple use guidelines for that area.

##### Limited Route

Access on route is limited to use by motor vehicles in one or more of the following ways and limited with respect to:

- 1) number of vehicles allowed.
- 2) types of vehicles allowed.
- 3) time or season of vehicle use.
- 4) permitted or licensed vehicle use only.
- 5) establishment of speed limits.

The same exceptions to motor vehicle use of closed routes also apply to limited routes.

Except in Congressionally designated wilderness areas, open, closed, and limited route designations may be made in each of the four multiple use classes, in ACECs, and in unclassified lands. [#3, 82]

### STOPPING AND PARKING

Stopping and parking and/or vehicular camping along "routes of travel" will be limited to within ~~400~~ 300 [#3, 82 & #49, 82] feet of the route. In some locations, specific parking or stopping areas may be signed "open" or "closed" to protect fragile or sensitive resources ~~values~~ values [#3, 82] adjacent to the route or to provide a safe place to stop. The intent of this policy is to curtail the uncontrolled widening and/or extension of access routes by vehicles stopping or parking along the route.

### ACCESS ON WASHES, SAND DUNES, AND DRY LAKES

#### Washes

Vehicle access using desert washes will be governed by the area designation for the ~~area~~ vicinity in which the wash is located. In areas designated "closed," vehicle access in desert washes will be prohibited. In areas designated "open," vehicle access in desert washes will be permitted. In all "limited" areas, vehicle use in desert washes will be ~~restricted to "existing" (Class M) or "approved" (Class L) vehicle routes of travel. In addition, washes as access routes may have some type of travel limitation e.g., speed limits, seasonal closure, etc., imposed to protect the resource values found in or along the wash.~~ controlled as indicated earlier for routes of travel in Class L, M and I. In addition, washes as access routes may have some type of travel limitation, such as speed limits or seasonal closure, imposed to protect the resources found in or along the wash or to minimize conflicts with other uses. [#3, 82]

#### Sand Dunes and Dry Lakes

Because of the unique geography of these areas, "routes of travel" cannot be readily delineated. Therefore, significant sand dunes and dry lakes within the California Desert are designated either "open" or "closed" to vehicu-

lar travel regardless of the multiple-use class in which the dune system or dry lake is located. The management objective for each dune system or dry lake will dictate the area's vehicle-use designation. Special monitoring requirements will be needed to protect the resource values in these areas, which are listed in Table 8.9.

TABLE 8.9

Designated Vehicle Access for Significant Dry Lakes and Sand Dunes in the CDCA

Dry Lakes	Class	Motor Vehicle Access
1. Salt Dry Lake	L	Closed
2. Mesquite Dry Lake	M	Closed
3. Ivanpah Dry Lake	L	Closed <sup>1</sup>
4. Silurian Dry Lake	I	Open
5. Superior Dry Lake	L	Closed <sup>1,3,4</sup>
6. Harper Dry Lake	L	Closed <sup>1,3,4</sup>
7. El Mirage Dry Lake	I	Open
8. Soggy Dry Lake	I	Open
9. Melville Dry Lake	I	Open
10. Means Dry Lake	I	Open
11. Soda Dry Lake	L	Closed
12. Ford Dry Lake	M	Open
13. Panamint Dry Lake (south of Hwy. 190)	L	Open
14. Panamint Dry Lake	L	Closed
15. Silver Dry Lake	L	Closed <sup>2,3</sup>
16. Coyote Dry Lake	M	Closed <sup>2,3</sup>
17. East and West Cronese Dry Lake <u>[#1, 83]</u>	L	Closed
<b>Sand Dunes</b>		
1. Eureka Dunes	C	Closed
2. Saline Dunes	L	Closed
3. Panamint Dunes	C	Closed <sup>2</sup>
4. Dumont Dunes	I	Open
5. Kelso Dunes	C	Closed
6. Cadiz Dunes	L	Closed
7. Imperial/Algodones/Dunes	C	Closed
	L	Open
	I	Open
8. Rice Valley Dunes	M	Open
9. Olancho Dunes	M	Open
10. Ibex Dunes	M	Closed
		<u>[#2, 83]</u>

<sup>1</sup> Open to non-motorized vehicles access (see Recreation Element)

<sup>2</sup> Except by permit

<sup>3</sup> Except for approved route(s) of travel.

<sup>4</sup> Limited passage of vehicles across area; no motorized vehicle free play.



## IMPLEMENTATION

### PRIORITIES

~~Priority for~~ On-the-ground implementation of vehicle designations will be established, based on the following considerations, in order of priority:

(1) Due to the sensitivity of the inventoried resources ~~values~~, highest priority will be given to Multiple-Use Class C (WSA) and L areas and ACECs and Special Areas which are currently experiencing vehicle use inconsistent with the management objectives.

(2) Priority will be given to marking the boundaries of those open areas in Class I where high potential for confusion over boundaries exists, ~~especially and~~ the boundaries of the military reservations.

(3) Vehicle-access ~~designation~~ limitations will be implemented in Multiple-Use Class M areas which are currently experiencing vehicle use inconsistent with the management objectives.

(4) Vehicle-access ~~designations~~ limitations will be implemented in Multiple-Use Class C and L areas in which there is little intensive vehicle use.

(5) Vehicle-access ~~designations~~ limitations will be implemented in the remainder of Multiple-Use Class M areas and Multiple-Use Class I areas ~~and, where necessary, in unclassified areas.~~ [#3, 82]

### AREA DESIGNATION PROCESS

Approval of the Plan constitutes the designation of all public lands areas in the CDCA. All "open" and "closed" areas identified on the Motorized-Vehicle Access Element map (Map 10) are designated and appropriate documentation actions are being initiated. ~~(See Access and Routes of Travel Pending Implementation, below.)~~ "Limited" areas will require detailed analysis to insure that each area's limitations are appropriate to the issues and resources involved. Until such limitations are put into effect, these areas will be managed on an interim basis as explained under "Interim Management of Vehicle Access". [#3, 82]

### ON-THE-GROUND IMPLEMENTATION

The vehicle-management designations "open," "closed," and "limited" are commensurate with the multiple-use class management objectives for each area. While vehicle-access designations generally follow multiple-use class boundaries, there are several cases where the area's vehicle designation may be either more restrictive or less restrictive than that of the surrounding multiple-use class. Examples include ACECs, Special Areas, sand dunes, and dry lakes. Designated vehicle access, as it generally will be applied, is described below. ~~and will be referred to the District Multiple-Use Advisory Council for review and advice.~~

### Open Areas [#3, 82]

Vehicle use in open areas is restricted by the operating regulations and vehicle standards set forth in 43 CFR 8341 and 8343. Open area designations are effective with Plan approval.

ORV-play open areas will be signed and identified on maps for public distribution. In open areas that abut private lands, BLM will provide information which will encourage recreationists to avoid unauthorized use. Signs and brochures will be used, as well as on-site personnel or the placement of permanent kiosks.

Military land boundaries adjacent to motorized play open areas will be signed, and maps will be noted, "Department of Defense Installation, NOT OPEN TO PUBLIC ACCESS". A complete discussion of open areas can be found in the Recreation Element of the Final Plan, and in Appendix V to the Proposed Plan of October, 1980.

### Closed Areas [#3, 82]

All closed areas will be signed where necessary to prevent unauthorized use, and identified on maps for public distribution.

### Limited (Vehicle Use) Areas [#3, 82]

Base on implementation priorities, BLM will, with assistance from the public, determine which routes in Class L and M areas need to be closed or limited in some other way. Route approval will be based on these considerations (from 43 CFR 8342.1 (1981)):

1. Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability.

2. Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats.

3. Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to ensure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors.

4. Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.

Routes not approved for vehicle access would in most instances be obliterated, barricaded, signed, or otherwise marked. Wherever possible, natural and/or physical barriers would be used to close routes rather than a multitude of signs.

~~Multiple-Use Class-I~~

~~Generally three types of vehicular access needs fall into this multiple-use class: (1) access for motorized recreation vehicle play open areas, (2) access for intensive mining, and (3) access for intensive energy development. Public lands in Multiple-Use Class I will be either "open" or "limited to existing routes of travel." Vehicle use in open areas is restricted by the operating regulations and vehicle standards set forth in 43 CFR 8431 and 8433. "Open" area designations are effective with Plan approval. Other designations will be completed by 1987.~~

~~Motorized recreation vehicle play open areas will be signed and identified on maps for public distribution. Military land boundaries adjacent to motorized vehicle play open areas will be signed, and maps will be noted, "Department of Defense Installation, NOT OPEN TO PUBLIC ACCESS." (See Recreation Element and Appendix V to the Proposed Plan, October 1980, for complete discussion of recreation vehicle "play areas.")~~

~~In motorized vehicle play open areas that abut private lands, BLM will provide information which will encourage recreationists to avoid unauthorized use. Signs and brochures will be used, as well as on-site personnel, trail-ers staffed with personnel during heavy use periods, or the placement of permanent kiosks.~~

~~Multiple-Use Class-M~~

~~Implementation of "existing routes of travel" will involve preparing a series of maps based on the aerial photos. These maps will be published and distributed. By basing the identified vehicle routes on the aerial photo coverage, continued proliferation of vehicle routes can be clearly documented and corrective action taken.~~

~~Maps will be produced and distributed as soon as possible after approval of the Plan and within two years of Plan approval. On the ground signing, primarily of "closed" areas, will be completed by December 1987. Wherever possible, natural and/or physical barriers will be used to close area routes rather than a multitude of signs.~~

~~Multiple-Use Class-L~~

~~Access in Multiple-Use Class L is designated as "limited to approved routes of travel." Actual on the ground route designation for Class L will be completed within two years after approval of this Plan. Public participation will be a part of the "route approval" decision process.~~

~~In Multiple-Use Class L areas, vehicle access is limited to only those routes "approved" and marked as vehicle access routes. Routes not "approved" for vehicle access in most instances will be obliterated, barricaded, signed, or shown "closed" on maps. "Approved" routes will be signed or otherwise marked or mapped so that these routes of travel which are clearly open will be readily identifiable.~~

~~Route Designation Factors Multiple-Use Class-L~~

~~Decisions on approval of vehicle routes for Class L will be based on an analysis of each situation, using the following decision criteria:~~

- ~~(1) Is the route new or existing?~~
- ~~(2) Does the route provide access for resource use or enjoyment?~~
- ~~(3) Are there alternate access opportunities?~~
- ~~(4) Does the route cause considerable adverse impacts?~~
- ~~(5) Are there alternate access routes which do not cause considerable adverse impacts?~~

## Multiple-Use Class C

All public lands in Multiple-Use Class C are recommended as suitable for wilderness (see Wilderness Element). Congressionally designated wilderness areas are by law closed to motorized vehicles. Accordingly, as Congress acts and designates these or any other areas as wilderness, the public lands will be designated "closed" to vehicle use unless exempted. On-the-ground implementation will involve boundary signing and maps.

Vehicle use on lands preliminarily recommended as suitable for wilderness, but not yet designated by Congress as wilderness, will be managed as "limited to approved routes of travel," commensurate with under guidelines described for Multiple-Use Class L (see Wilderness Element and Interim Management Policy for WSAs). Limitations on vehicle access are necessary to protect wilderness values as well as other significant resources. Any vehicle access routes within the suitable WSA will be analyzed in management plan preparations. [#3, 82]

Maps [#3, 82]

In Multiple-Use Class I areas not open to vehicle play, Class M and L areas, and proposed Class C areas, the existing route network will be recorded on 7 1/2 or 15 minute USGS maps. The inventory will make use of aerial photos, State and Federal agency maps, and other sources. As many routes will be identified a practical. These maps will then be used to monitor vehicle use impacts and to produce maps for public use.

Once the inventory is reasonably complete, "primary access route" will be designated by each Area Office. These routes, including some washes, will be those upon which the BLM (with public input) wishes to encourage use. Selected routes will be signed on-the-ground with numbers or names that will also be on BLM-produced maps which will be made available to the public.

Maps are management tools as well as aids to vehicle users. General access maps in the future will show the primary access network and other selected routes whose use causes few if any problems. It is likely that some open routes will not be shown if such "advertisement" would cause user or resource conflict due to heavier use. As a

matter of policy, closed routes will be shown only as a short spur to mark the intersection with approved routes. Detailed maps "USGS maps" showing secondary access routes will be made available for a fee.

### Signs [#3, 82]

Signs are also important management tools, which are necessary because many desert users will not have BLM maps. Any decisions to limit use of a road or area must be reflected in on-the-ground signs. Designated areas and their approved routes, open and closed area boundaries, and the primary access network will receive priority in the signing program. Signs will be designed and placed only where necessary, to minimize visual impact.

### **ACCESS AND ROUTES OF TRAVEL PENDING IMPLEMENTATION INTERIM MANAGEMENT OF VEHICLE ACCESS [#3, 82]**

Since 1973, BLM has managed access and recreation and recreation-vehicle use under the Interim Critical Management Program (ICMP). An integral part of that program was the release of a series of 22 maps covering the entire CDCA. These maps illustrate the ICMP designations through the use of a color code and a network of access routes compiled from existing maps, public input, and field review. These maps show access in far greater detail than the small-scale desert wide map issued at the same time which simply showed designations.

With approval of the Desert Plan, the new designations have become effective. There are, however, major changes in designations from the ICMP, and BLM will not immediately be able to get on the ground signing or road approve. For this reason, BLM will continue to use at least parts of the ICMP maps as they relate to access routes. These routes will apply in areas of Classes I, M, and L, which are not "open," "closed," or "preliminary recommended (suitable or unsuitable) wilderness areas." The color coded designations on the ICMP maps will not apply.

For displaying vehicle access areas, routes, and play areas on maps distributed to the public, a "zoning" system will be used. The designations will be based on the multiple use classes in the Plan. They are as follows: The ICMP maps and designations will no longer apply. Until implementation of this element is complete, the following guidelines are in effect:

Existing routes of travel may be used in all Class L and M areas, and in those Class I areas not designated open and in unclassified lands, unless other limitations are in effect. Tables 8 and 9 list all closed areas. In some areas, certain routes have been closed under ICMP guidelines; these will remain closed. As implementation proceeds, some old limitations may be revoked and others added; the public will be notified as changes are proposed.

In Class C areas, vehicle use will occur as if the areas

were Class L until such time as the area formally becomes wilderness, except in those cases where vehicle use could impair wilderness suitability.

In wilderness study areas, vehicle use will be managed according to the guidelines for the class that area has been assigned, or according to the guidelines set forth in the WSA Interim Management Policy, whichever is more restrictive.

### Zone A-Open

Vehicles may travel anywhere within the area. This will apply to: (1) areas specifically designated Class I "open," and (2) certain sand dunes and dry lakebeds.

### Zone B-Limited Vehicular Access

Interim "existing routes of travel," based on the existing ICMP, will be used only until specific "routes of travel" can be identified. "Routes of travel" in this zone will be limited to the "existing routes of travel" as identified in the Interim Critical Management Plan on a temporary basis. In approximately two years, the permanent routes of travel in Zone B will be identified either as "approved" (Multiple Use Class L) or "existing" (Multiple Use Class M and I), and these interim maps will be revised.

### Zone C-Closed to Vehicular Access

No vehicle travel is allowed. This will apply to: (1) some land in ACECs where provided for in the ACEC Management Plan, (2) certain sand dunes and dry lakebeds and washes, (3) areas designated as "closed" on the list which follows in this section, and (4) wilderness areas when established by Congress unless exempted.

As on the ground implementation of the Plan is completed (by signing or other means) vehicle routes may be added or subtracted from this network in accordance with the procedures contained elsewhere in this element. Legitimate access needs not represented on the maps will be added on a case by case basis.

Areas in Classes I and M which are "open" or "limited to existing routes of travel" have become effective with approval of the Plan.

In Class C areas, vehicle use will occur as if the areas were Class L until such time as the area formally becomes wilderness, except in those cases where vehicle use could impair wilderness characteristics.

In lands under wilderness review, vehicle use will be managed in accordance with the underlying class and ICMP access routes, except for Class C, although the WSA Interim Management Policy regarding nonimpairment will apply. Several areas closed for access under the ICMP are proposed for continued closure or are preliminary recommended as wilderness or restricted under ACEC Management Plans. Implementation may or may not involve boundary adjustments. To avoid a redesignation



~~tion process and also to avoid misunderstanding in interpretation of the Plan maps, the areas listed in Table 0, designated as "closed" under the ICMP, will remain closed under the Plan regardless of underlying class, unless modified by subsequent implementing action.~~

~~In addition, the following areas which have been closed under interim actions, or are closed by virtue of non-wilderness protection items in this Plan are:~~

Desert Tortoise Natural Area	L
Darwin Falls	M
Fossil Falls	L
Mesa Hills (NW half)	G
Squaw Spring	L

### DESIGNATION REVISIONS [#3, 82]

~~Decisions on affecting vehicle route designation are intended to meet present access needs as well as to protect sensitive resource values access, such as area designations and specific route limitations, are intended to meet present access needs and protect sensitive resources. Future access needs or protection requirements may require changes in these designations or limitations, or the construction of new routes, will necessitate amendments to insure the management objectives are being realized.~~ For mining operations, additional access needs will be considered in accordance with the Bureau's Exploration and Mining-Wilderness Review Program regulations (43 CFR 3802) and Surface Management of Public Lands Under the U.S. Mining Laws (43 CFR 3809). Access needs for other uses, such as roads to private lands, grazing developments, competitive events, or communication sites, will be reviewed on an individual basis under the authority outlined in Title V of FLPMA and other appropriate regulations. Each proposal ~~will~~ would be evaluated for environmental effects and subjected to public review and comment. As present access needs become obsolete or as considerable adverse impacts are identified through the monitoring program, ~~these area~~ these area designations or route limitations will be revised. In all instances, new routes for permanent or temporary use would be selected to minimize resource damage and use conflicts, in keeping with the criteria of 43 CFR 8342.1.

### MONITORING

A major component of the vehicle-access ~~designation process element~~ is the monitoring of impacts resulting from ~~these designations~~ vehicle use. The analysis of impacts and reassessment of management decisions is an integral part of the Bureau's response to the legislative mandate.

The primary objectives of the motorized-vehicle access monitoring program are to:

(1) Identify and document when unacceptable levels and kinds of impacts occur on natural, cultural, and historic values.

(2) Identify when impacts will preclude corrective or rehabilitative actions.

(3) Identify the type of vehicle equipment and/or related use which is causing, or likely to cause, impacts.

(4) Provide the information necessary to make immediate and long-range decisions on the use or prohibition of vehicles on designated or existing access routes.

Recommendations of monitoring efforts must be specific to each individual area, taking into consideration such issues as access needs, use levels, user conflicts, and impacts on resources. Monitoring efforts may vary. Monitoring techniques include field observations, remote sensing, ground photographs, and environmental study plots.

Options to ~~limit~~, designate or close specific travel routes ~~within Class M areas and the continual updating of vehicle designations in Class L or~~ areas will be available to the manager. These options will be invoked when monitoring reveals that Plan objectives are not being met because of identified adverse effects resulting from vehicle travel. [#3, 82]

### ENFORCEMENT, COMPLIANCE, AND COOPERATION

Enforcement of these vehicle designations ~~will~~ would rely heavily on indirect, cooperative actions, such as voluntary compliance, peer pressure, public information brochures and maps, educational/awareness programs, and access route signing.

Access and area designation planning ~~will~~ would be done in close coordination with desert users so that all legitimate access needs can be incorporated into the designation. In sensitive areas or where these compliance methods are not successful, other methods ~~will~~ would be employed. These methods include emergency closures, special access permits, issuance of right-of-way easements, or further restriction of the route(s) in question to provide additional use limitations (season of use, limitations on the number ~~of~~ or types of vehicles permitted, speed limits, etc.). Direct law enforcement, either by contractual agreement with local law enforcement agencies, or by Bureau Desert Rangers and/or visitor services specialists, will be a last-resort option.

~~Vehicle access needs will be a high priority project in the implementation of volunteer service projects. Volunteers will be actively sought to help implement the program. Route designation tasks in these projects will~~ would include sign placement, obliteration of closed routes, and identification of access needs.

### LIMITATIONS DURING INTERIM MANAGEMENT [#3, 82]

~~The Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review states that no lands will be closed to vehicle use solely because they are under wilderness review and that, unless use by motorized vehicles is threatening to impair an area's wilderness~~



~~suitability, vehicle use may be permitted on existing ways and trails. Vehicle designations may be more restrictive than existing vehicle routes if these designations are based on identified resource values other than wilderness. While wilderness interim management policy normally will preclude vehicle closures in Multiple Use Class C areas, closures can be made for resource values other than wilderness.~~

~~Implementation of vehicle management designations in Multiple Use Classes I, M, and L will use this Interim Management Policy except where the access designation~~

~~would be more restrictive. In those cases the more restrictive of either "route approval" or Interim Management Policy will prevail. The nonimpairment standard requires that the threshold levels for the determination of "considerable adverse impacts" will be more stringent for WSAs than those for non-WSA areas.~~

~~Route(s) will be appropriately approved to manage the type of vehicle impacts creating a threat to wilderness suitability. Monitoring and surveillance of vehicular use in WSAs will be a priority in Plan implementation.~~